with the probe card 12. A plurality of probe needles 7 are supported on the lower surface of the probe card substrate 12, and on the top of the probe card substrate 12 are provided a reinforcement member 13 for reinforcing the probe card substrate 12, and a plurality of ZIF connectors 11. A plurality of ZIF sockets 9 corresponding to ZIF connectors 11 are provided on the lower surface of the test head 10. The semiconductor elements 6 exchange a test input signal and test output signals with the tester 3, by means of the ZIF connectors 11 being coupled to the ZIF sockets 9. The ZIF sockets 9 incorporate springs and are connected to the ZIF connectors 11 by means of meshing action.--

IN THE CLAIMS:

A clean version of the claims that have been amended appear below:

1. (Amended) A semiconductor element test apparatus comprising:

a stage on which a semiconductor wafer having semiconductor elements is to be mounted;

a probe card having a plurality of probe needles opposing the semiconductor wafer; and

a probe card hold member for holding test probe card; and

the semiconductor elements are tested by bring the plurality of probe needles into contact with the semiconductor elements of the semiconductor wafer, wherein

the probe card has a probe card substrate for supporting the plurality of probe needles and a reinforcement member for reinforcing the probe card substrate, and the reinforcement member

has a plurality of mount positions and counterbores of substantially the same depth and shape in each of the plurality of mount positions; and

the probe card substrate is attached to the probe card hold member through the reinforcement member at the counterbores by screws.

8. (Amended) A semiconductor element test apparatus comprising:

a stage on which a semiconductor wafer having semiconductor elements is to be mounted;

a probe card having a plurality of probe needles opposing the semiconductor wafer; and

a probe card hold member for holding test probe card; and

the semiconductor elements are tested by bring the plurality of probe needles into contact with the semiconductor elements of the semiconductor wafer, wherein

the probe card has a probe card substrate for supporting the plurality of probe needles and a reinforcement member for reinforcing the probe card substrate, and the reinforcement member has counterbores of substantially the same depth and shape in a plurality of mount positions;

the reinforcement member comprises a peripheral section having a plurality of reinforcement arms, each reinforcement arm having the mount position, and a frame-shaped center section, and a reinforcement piece for two interconnecting mutually-opposing sides of the frame-shaped center section is provided in the center section; and

the probe card substrate is attached to the probe card hold member through the reinforcement member at the counterbores by screws.

10. (Amended) A method of testing a semiconductor element through use of a semiconductor test apparatus which brings a plurality of probe needles provided on a probe card into contact with semiconductor elements of a semiconductor wafer, wherein

the probe card has a probe card substrate for supporting the plurality of probe needles, and a reinforcement member to be used with the probe card substrate;

the semiconductor element test apparatus has a probe card hold member having the probe card attached thereto;

the reinforcement member is attached to the probe card substrate and to the probe card hold member at a plurality of mount positions by means of screws;

counterbores of substantially the same depth and shape are formed in each of the respective mount positions on the reinforcement member; and

the probe card substrate is attached to the probe card hold member by means of the screws and by way of the counterbores.

REMARKS

At the time of the Office Action dated December 4, 2002, claims 1-10 were pending and rejected in this application. Claims 1, 8 and 10 have been amended. Care has been exercised to avoid the introduction of new matter. Specifically, independent claims 1 and 10 have been amended to clarify that each mount position on a reinforcement member is provided with a counterbore of substantially the same depth and shape. Claim 8 has been amended to be placed in independent form by including of the limitations recited in independent claim 1 upon which claim 8 directly depends. Applicant submits that the present Amendment does not generate any new matter issue.